

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for selecting a cell for handover of a continuing communication, wherein the communication is initially routed through a first cell of a partner mobile network, comprising:
 - setting a flag with respect to a communication that is being carried on a partner mobile network as including a mobile station of a subscriber of a home mobile network;
 - determining that a handover from a first cell in the partner mobile network to a second cell among a plurality of candidate cells, is necessary to maintain communications for the mobile station; and
 - initiating a handover of the communication from the first cell to the second cell if the second cell belongs to the home mobile network, wherein whether the second cell belongs to the home mobile network is determined, at least in part, by evaluating whether the flag is set.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein, prior to the handover, radio parameters associated with the second cell belonging to the home mobile network are received by the partner mobile network.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the partner and the home mobile networks operates its own mobile switching center.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein, prior to the communication handover, the partner mobile network receives information including control channel and system parameters associated with the home mobile network.
5. The method of claim 4, further comprising;
 - sending a handover request from the base station controller of the partner mobile network, the request including parameters associated with the second cell;

receiving resource information from the home network at the base station controller of the partner network, the resource information including information associated with the second cell; and

sending information from the partner network at the mobile station of the subscriber to the home network, including an appropriate communications channel associated with the second cell.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the control channel and system parameters associated with the home network are stored in a database accessible to the mobile switching center of the partner network.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the communication is a voice transmission.

8. The method of claim 4, further comprising: receiving a communication at a base station controller of the partner mobile network that controls the first cell, including at least one home mobile network channel.

9. The method of claim 8, further comprising:
monitoring measurement reports sent by the mobile station belonging to the subscriber of the home mobile network, including a signal strength of the second cell controlling the at least one home mobile network channel, at the base station controller of the partner mobile network that controls the first cell; and

excluding cells not reporting over the at least one home mobile network channel from further measurements.

10. The method of claim 4, wherein the communication is a GPRS message.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
removing cells not belonging to the home network from a measurement list associated with the mobile station of the subscriber to the home network; and
sending a measurement list to the mobile station of the subscriber to the home network, wherein the measurement list includes the second cell.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein the control channel and system parameters associated with the home network are stored in a database accessible to the serving GPRS support node of the partner network.

13. A method for effecting mobile communication handover from a partner mobile network to a home mobile network, comprising:
receiving a first message sent from a mobile station at a first base station controller of a partner mobile network, including an international mobile subscriber identity belonging to the mobile station;

flagging the mobile station as belonging to a subscriber to a home mobile network;
sending a second message from the first base station controller of the partner mobile network to a serving GPRS service node of the home mobile network, including the international mobile station identity, and further including information used to locate the mobile station within the partner mobile network;

receiving a third message at a second base station controller of the partner mobile network, including cell information associated with the home mobile network; and

sending a fourth communication from the base station controller of the partner network to the mobile station of the home mobile network, including a packet measurement list that

includes at least one cell belonging to the home mobile network, as a result of the mobile station being flagged.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising handing over the mobile station of the subscriber to the home mobile network into a cell associated with the home mobile network, the cell included in the packet measurement list.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the information used to locate the mobile station within the partner network includes data indicating the partner network cell where the mobile station resides, wherein the partner network cell where the mobile station resides is adjacent to the home region.

16. A method for effecting handover of a GPRS communication from a partner mobile network to a home mobile network, comprising:

receiving a first message sent from a mobile station at a first base station controller of a partner mobile network, including an international mobile subscriber identity (IMSI) belonging to the mobile station;

flagging the mobile station as belonging to a subscriber to a home mobile network;

sending the IMSI to a base station controller of the partner mobile network, with a flag indicating that the IMSI is associated with the home mobile network;

receiving a measurement report from the mobile station at a second base station controller of the partner mobile network, wherein the measurement report indicates a handover condition; and

sending a new packet measurement list to the mobile station, wherein the new list does not include cells belonging to the partner network.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising:
receiving measurements from home network cells at the mobile station;
adding the measurements from the home network cells to an updated measurement list;
and
handing over the GPRS communication into a home network cell belonging to the
updated measurement list.

18. A method for increasing revenues of a home mobile communications network,
comprising:
establishing a flag convention understandable by a partner mobile network and a home
mobile network, the flag indicating that a mobile station belongs to a subscriber to the home
mobile network;
storing information including the flag in a database that is in communication with the
partner mobile network;
setting the flag when the partner mobile network handles a communication to a mobile
station belonging to a subscriber to the home mobile network; and
handing over the communication back to the home mobile network whenever the mobile
station enters a region in which the home network operates, the handover being effected due to
the flag being set,
whereby revenues are increased to the home mobile network by increasing the
likelihood that a handover will be to a home mobile network cell.

19. The method of claim 16, further including storing control channel and system
parameters associated with the home mobile network in a database in communication with the
partner network.

20. The method of claim 16, herein the communication is a voice transmission.

21. The method of claim 16 wherein the communication is a GPRS transmission.